

AIDS Response

Dear Mr Ayana,
I write in response to your recent NEXUS Supplement on the AIDS virus, published Spring 1988.

First of all, my congratulations on gathering together a large mass of data (often unpalatable to the non-specialist) that attempts to address the problem of viruses in the global community. By focusing on the issue that has contributed the most in modern times to changing fundamental ideas and attitudes on global and personal health issues, this Supplement gives the concerned reader a chance to come to grips with some of the political and socio-economic aspects of virus transmission.

Unfortunately, you seem to have taken a rather narrow political stance than your data can accurately substantiate - I refer to your first section and major headline - *The Heterosexual Myth*". Surely you meant to say:

THE SEXUALITY MYTH!

As a human being I am concerned about the spread of viruses such as AIDS throughout the world, but at the social and political level I am more concerned about the moral climate that can so quickly label one unique but lethal virus the "gay plague" and stigmatise the adherents of that particular lifestyle. Your choice of the word "heterosexual" in your headlines serves, albeit unintentionally, to reinforce this opinion of the homosexual community and fails to come to grips with the concept that AIDS virus transmission has nothing to do with sexuality *per se* but in fact relates to certain sexual practices, along with other events such as sharing of hypodermic syringes, inoculation with contaminated vaccines, blood transfusions of infected blood products, etc.

Receptive anal intercourse is a high risk activity only when it involves a tear in the lining of the rectum and this is a high risk activity for anyone - regardless of the sex of the participant. Are you assuming that heterosexuals are immune to the eroticism of anal sex - surely not? The main route of AIDS virus transmission is via body fluids interaction, as the later sections of your booklet point out very clearly. This objectivity is not evident in this the first section of your booklet, and the tone of your writing seems to confer an "immunity" (pun intended) on heterosexuals that non-heterosexuals (ie homosexuals) do not have!

To remain aware of the direct political implications of your role as a writer and publisher in an off-times prejudices society and not contribute further to these prejudices is a challenge surely

worthy of the "new age" to which you aspire. I feel that it is vital to the health of our global community that you do not pander to the more intolerant beliefs of segments of our society.

My response on reading your opening section should have been delight and relief that I, as a recently diagnosed HIV negative woman, had little to fear from the AIDS virus. However, by the end of your booklet I was confused and somewhat alarmed at the lack of conclusive proof for the "heterosexual myth". The real issues for containing the AIDS virus are, to society, beliefs and practices at the personal hygiene and lifestyle level implying individual health responsibility.

Food for thought and perhaps material for a future NEXUS rebuttal.

L. Rouse, October 1988
746 New South Head Rd.
ROSE BAY NSW 2029

Dear Mr Rouse,
AIDS - The Real Story was never designed to fuel the fires of anti-gay fundamentalists or attack gays. But the general public has not been clearly told the simple truth that homosexuals discovered (despite general misinformation) some time ago - that the only real transmission of AIDS comes from direct blood contact. Anal sex is virtually the only sexual practice that can lead to direct blood contact - and this fact hasn't been disseminated widely to people in non-high risk groups.

Gays in particular have shown a responsible attitude to stemming its spread - if heterosexuals are to do likewise they must not engage in dangerous practices - anal sex and IV drug abuse.

'Straight' heterosexual sex has not been proven to be a common transmission medium for AIDS - In fact, quite the opposite seems to be true. There is no conclusive proof to show that AIDS has been spreading heterosexually (in a vaginally transmissible manner) after a decade of painstaking search for such proof.

My major regret is that some people use the first section of AIDS - The Real Story to back their own particular moral standpoint - and fail to read the rest.

A more salient point concerning homosexual spread would seem to be the questions raised about the role of early Hepatitis-B inoculation experiments in the first widespread transmission of AIDS to US gays and intravenous drug users, as described on page 19.

The truth must come out. The limited resources available to NEXUS mean that authoritative researchers must investigate further.

Thanks for clearing the air - R.A.

Editorial

This Summer's NEXUS has seen many changes, some of which have arisen from YOUR suggestions in our readership survey (in #5). Other changes have come of themselves; we wish to thank everyone who's made it possible for NEXUS to survive and thrive to this point, with special thanks to the entire crew who brought it up through its first year, including Nissa, Elmer Griffin and M'Bob.

When you skirt the fringes of the collective consciousness it can lead to strange repercussions. But the pursuit of truths often leads us into the space described by Robert Anton Wilson as 'Chapel Perilous', a place where all fears must be faced, explored, gone beyond. Exploring and going beyond these fears is largely what this issue of NEXUS is about (it's also led to a slight rearrangement of your editor's face - an occupational hazard).

How the West Was Won is a new series which outlines one mechanism of the amnesia of collective human memory in the 'breakdown of the bicameral mind', a common thoughtstream shared by all humans in the past until a planetary event sundered the collective mind, drenching it in babble. *Egyptian History and Cosmic Catastrophe* shows how the works of Dr Immanuel Velikovsky illuminate this dark period in human memory, drawing from human amnesia the likely events of the past - and explaining why it was a 'dark period' in more ways than one. *Conversations with Uncle Martin* brings you the memoirs of a Martian survivor, speaking to his children - all of these stories and more may help to illuminate the past that has brought us to this juncture.

Perhaps we're stretching your belief systems with these articles. But those who forget the lessons of history are condemned to repeat them - even if you can't step in the same river twice! Look, folks - we're all living on a billiard ball called Gaia and had better take good care of her and each other. Even if you believe there are conscious beings watching our predicament from 'outside' this space, don't depend on them for help. They



can only help us help ourselves.

It's time to grow beyond the parent-saviour/helpless child paradigm. When we learn the truth about our past, we can see our present predicament with fresh eyes.

We're all about to live through the most exciting time in the last few thousand years. If we REAL-ISE that now is the time we can all change ourselves and the world, our future becomes a potential paradise. Don't be afraid to change yourself and lifestyle - if we keep up with the Changes, rather than the Joneses, we can give peace a chance.

With ut peace at home, in the heart - world peace is an illusion. Where do your beliefs come from? Look to your heart for your own truth ★

R. Ayana